



The Legend of Ban-Dal: A New Korean Folktale

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“Small, determined” Su-Kyoung lives in a lovely village beneath a mountain. Her people fish each day for the food they need, taking no more than that from the nearby stream. Then a visitor calls their practices into question, planting seeds of greed and gluttony; soon, Su-Kyoung’s idyllic surroundings are depleted. She is sent on a quest to lift a curse whose origins her neighbors do not yet recognize as trickery. A mythical bear helps her toward a transformative revelation; the bear is itself transformed for its kindness. This thoughtful folk tale’s morals are complemented by dreamlike graphite-and-ink illustrations that honor the intricate grandeur of nature.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (May / June 2026)

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